



Undersecretary Gottemoeller – University of Sydney

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**Remarks for Rose Gottemoeller  
Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security  
The Role of the United States in Asia-Pacific Security  
University of Sydney**

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Thank you for the introduction and thank you to the hosts of this lecture, Bates Gill, the United States Studies Centre, and the University of Sydney. Thanks also to the distinguished faculty, staff, and students for your kind welcome and for having me on your beautiful campus. This university is recognized as a top institution for teaching, research and scholarship, so I am honored to be here today.

*Rebalance*

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, no region holds more potential for growth, development, and prosperity than the Asia-Pacific region. Hosting more than half the world's population and a growing middle class, this region generates half of both global economic output and global trade.

And yet, military buildup, maritime disputes, nuclear proliferation, environmental problems, inequality, and corruption all pose threats to the region's dynamism and economic vitality.

To support sustained progress and demonstrate the United States' long term commitment to the region, we are dedicating every element of American power—diplomatic, military, economic, and development, as well as the power of our values—in a way that demonstrates the truly comprehensive nature of our engagement.

The Asia-Pacific region is a focus for our most innovative and dynamic planning efforts, as we adjust our military presence across the region to one that is more geographically distributed, operationally resilient, and politically sustainable. Our alliances and security partnerships have helped guarantee peace and security in the region for over 70 years. Today, we are working more closely with allies and partners than ever before, both in the region and around the world.

As we go forward, our military presence around the world will be rebalanced to reflect the priority we place on the Asia Pacific. By the end of this decade, the majority of our Navy ships and Air Force aircraft will be based out of the Pacific, and, to keep the peace and deter aggression, we will deploy more of our most advanced military capabilities to the region.



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During his February 2011 visit to Australia, President Obama announced new force posture initiatives to promote regional stability. This year, another 1,100 U.S. Marines will rotate through Darwin to conduct joint training and exercises with Australian counterparts.

We are also working with other regional allies and partners to meet common security challenges. We're updating the U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines for the first time in almost 20 years, a major step that will strengthen the Alliance to meet new security challenges and opportunities in the decades ahead, leveraging the growing capabilities of Japan's Self-Defense Forces.

With the Republic of Korea, 2014 saw several major accomplishments, including an agreement to provide increased financial support for U.S. troops on the Peninsula and a new framework outlining the conditions under which the ROK will assume wartime operational control over Alliance forces. These actions reflect the political and economic commitment of our two countries to making our alliance even more sustainable and adaptable.

We are also deepening our collaboration with the Republic of Korea on missile defense to deter and defend against North Korean threats. We remain vigilant in guarding against North Korea's destabilizing provocations, and its nuclear, chemical, biological and ballistic missile programs. We share the concerns of the international community about human rights abuses in North Korea. However, we continue to offer Pyongyang an improved bilateral relationship, provided it demonstrates a willingness to fulfill its denuclearization commitments and address other important concerns, including human rights concerns.

I have just visited the Philippines, where the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement that we signed last year updates and strengthens U.S.-Philippine defense cooperation to meet 21st century challenges. The agreement will facilitate the enhanced rotational presence of U.S. forces; facilitate humanitarian assistance and disaster relief in the Philippines and the region; improve opportunities for bilateral training; and support the long-term modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines as it strives to establish a minimum credible defense.

While we continue to reinvigorate our relationships with long-time partners, we are also working with emerging powers to develop new security partnerships. We have established new partnership frameworks with India, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam, each representing a historic expansion in cooperation on a range of issues.

New partnerships complement our close ties with not only allies, but also longstanding strategic and security partners like Singapore and New Zealand.

*Promoting Regional Peace and Prosperity*



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Of course, we cannot forget that security is inextricably intertwined with economics. In 2015, one of the most important things we can do to build on regional economic progress is to complete the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP. The TPP will lower barriers, open markets, and create jobs for our people. It is critical that we keep our sea lanes free for commerce. The Asia-Pacific region is home to many of the world's most heavily traveled trade and energy routes. Our economies today cannot function unless these sea lanes remain secure.

That is why we are committed to a future where freedom of navigation and peaceful use of the ocean is protected for all nations.

We believe an effective security order for Asia must be based on alliances founded on recognized mutual security, international law, and international standards, along with the peaceful resolution of disputes and not on spheres of influence, or coercion, or intimidation where big nations bully the small.

The United States shares the concerns of ASEAN and others over rising tensions and provocative unilateral actions to change the status quo in the South China Sea that risk destabilizing a region whose waters are essential for commerce. We support ASEAN efforts to conclude a code of conduct with China that reinforces international law in the South China Sea.

### *China*

The United States is committed to pursuing a constructive relationship with China. We welcome the continuing rise of a peaceful, prosperous, and stable China that plays a responsible role in world affairs.

We consistently seek to engage with Beijing at all levels on a wide range of issues. We also encourage China to adhere to international norms of behavior. And in this engagement, we will continue to be frank about where there are differences; and the United States will continue to stand up for our interests and principles, including our unwavering support for the fundamental human rights of all people.

We recognize that China has significant interests in, and bears significant responsibility for contributing to, a safer and more secure world. From countering proliferation to combating global climate change, the United States seeks opportunities to work constructively with China in addressing global challenges.

### *India*

America's global partnerships also extend across the Indian Ocean and Asian continent. India, a country with historic Asian influence, has become one of our most important democratic



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partners. The United States looks forward to working with India's government and Prime Minister Modi. We welcome India's increasingly active role in Asia's regional institutions, which strengthens regional order. We also welcome India's growing defense capabilities, coupled with our shared recognition of the importance of freedom of navigation in the Indian Ocean.

*U.S.-Australia Partnership*

Finally, we could not discuss the U.S. role in Asia-Pacific security without talking about our deep and enduring friendship with Australia. Although separated by a great ocean, the United States and Australia are bound together by our unshakable alliance based on shared values and common culture. Even in the context of the close relations we have shared throughout the history of our two great nations, the current level of friendship and joint action is remarkable – a partnership of global proportions.

In his remarks this past November to University of Queensland in Brisbane, President Obama stated that “our rebalance is not only about the United States doing more in Asia, it's also the Asia-Pacific region doing more with us around the world.”

The United States' relationship with Australia exemplifies this cooperative approach. Australia and the United States have stood shoulder-to-shoulder in every major conflict since World War I, including those far from our own shores. Today, we continue to work side by side to address many pressing global challenges – from countering violent extremism to fighting the spread of Ebola and opposing Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

2015 is a significant year in the history of our countries as it marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Australia-U.S. Free Trade Agreement and the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of U.S.-Australia diplomatic relations. But 2015 is also significant for the potential it offers for us to achieve even more together.

*Countering Violent Extremism*

The United States and our partners, including Australia, are helping to lead the fight to defeat the rise of violent extremism, wherever it exists.

Our shared mission to counter Daesh, a group that directly threatens the peace and stability of every single country in the region and has overtly threatened to take their horrific mission to every corner of the world, is of paramount importance.

Today, the international coalition that we have built has grown to more than 60 active members, all operating with the shared goal of disrupting, degrading, and ultimately destroying Daesh.



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Since September, our coalition has pursued a carefully crafted, comprehensive strategy to weaken Daesh on multiple fronts. We have launched 2,500 coordinated Coalition airstrikes, retaken already 700 square kilometers of territory – one-fifth of the populated area that they had controlled. We have deprived the militants of the use of 200 oil and gas facilities that they were using to get their revenue. We have disrupted their command structure, undermined its propaganda, taken out half of their senior leadership, squeezed its financing, damaged its supply networks, dispersed its personnel, and forced them to think twice before they move in an open convoy.

But we also cannot lose sight of the fact that this effort is only the beginning and the fight against violent extremists is not going to be decided on the battlefield alone. It must also be fought and won in classrooms, in workplaces, houses of worship, community centers, urban street corners, and halls of government. For that we will need the efforts of all Coalition partners and are grateful to have Australia as an ally in this fight.

*Arms Control and Nonproliferation*

The United States and Australia have also been strong partners in efforts to reduce and eventually eliminate the threat posed by nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

Yesterday was the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) – the cornerstone of arms control and nonproliferation. The “grand bargain” of the NPT set an enduring standard that is as relevant today as it was at the Treaty’s inception. That bargain comprises three reinforcing aspects wherein nuclear weapon states pursue disarmament, non-nuclear weapon states abstain from the pursuit of nuclear weapons and all countries are able to access the benefits of peaceful nuclear energy. For 45 years, the regime has thrived. When has faced with challenges, NPT Parties have worked together to make the entire nonproliferation regime stronger.

The Treaty has stemmed the tide of proliferation; it has facilitated cooperation among its States Parties; and it has institutionalized the norms of nonproliferation and disarmament. The three pillars of the Treaty provide its stability, its endurance. Each pillar is as important as the others. Each pillar reinforces the others, and each State Party can help strengthen all three.

In late April, the 190 Parties to the Treaty will meet in New York to discuss progress on advancing the commitments laid out in this essential agreement, as well as the challenges to its viability. For its part, the United States is fulfilling its commitments in all three pillars of the NPT.

Through efforts like the Canberra Commission, Australia has long been leader on these issues in both word and deed. The United States and Australia are working closely to counter weapons of



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mass destruction and improve CBRN security, including through the work of the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. We appreciate Australia's strong leadership in the Nuclear Security Summit and in strengthening the nuclear security architecture, including the IAEA.

Of course, as many of you know, Australia's work on international security issues is not limited to nuclear agreements. Australia was essential in the "end-game" of negotiations on both the Arms Trade Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention. Thirty years ago, Australia also brought together a group that now bears its name whose work focuses on minimizing the proliferation of chemical and biological materials and weapons technology. The Australia Group now includes 41 countries and the European Union. We also look forward to continuing our shared partnership to counter biological threats, including through the Global Health Security Agenda and our efforts in support of Able Response with the Republic of Korea.

There is no doubt that Australia will continue to be a leader on these issues and the United States is glad to have such a strong, smart, principled partner at the upcoming NPT Review Conference.

With that I will wrap up, so that we have time for questions, but I want to make clear that the United States is an Asia-Pacific power, and we are here to stay. With our allies and partners in the region, we are committed to enhancing security, expanding prosperity, fostering democratic values, and advancing human dignity. We know that Australia shares our abiding interest in security, shared prosperity, and fundamental rights for every person across the region. We are grateful for the remarkable partnership we have enjoyed with Australia and look forward to the next 75 years of cooperation.